



European Parliament

Ciarán Cuffe MEP  
Grace O'Sullivan MEP  
Senator Pauline O'Reilly  
Green Party Comhaontas Glas 16 Suffolk St.  
D02 AT85, Dublin 2, Ireland

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**Ursula von der Leyen**  
President of the European Commission  
By email: [ursula.von-der-leyen@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ursula.von-der-leyen@ec.europa.eu)  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1040 Bruxelles  
Belgium

Re. Attacks on Rafah, Gaza by Israeli Defence Forces

Dear President of the European Commission Ms. Ursula von der Leyen,

We write to express our deep concern regarding the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and to urge you to take action to protect civilians.

Today, the Israeli Defence Forces are attacking Rafah with grave consequences for the civilian population, who have nowhere left to go. The entire aid system, a critical lifeline for a population on the brink of famine, is at risk of collapse without a safe zone to administer it. You have stated that it would be totally unacceptable for Prime Minister Netanyahu to invade Rafah.

We ask that you do all within your power to persuade the Government of Israel and their Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to refrain from a ground invasion of Palestinian territory and cease these attacks. It is of the utmost importance to protect civilians in Gaza, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

As the number of fatalities rises to 35,000 in Palestine, we ask you to state directly to Prime Minister Netanyahu that his actions are wrong and use your powers to seek a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East. We urge you to work with Member States to introduce a ban on arms exports, and with countries such as Ireland and Spain to recognise the State of Palestine. In the interim we believe that the suspension of the EU-Israel Trade Agreement would send an important signal to Israel that the people of the European Union believe that Israel's actions are unacceptable and threatening of a wider peace in the Middle East.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,

Ciarán Cuffe MEP

Grace O'Sullivan MEP

Senator Pauline O'Reilly  
Oireachtas Éireann